

personnel (such as EMTs and other first responders) employed by State and local Governments.

This legislation does not pass good policy muster for a variety of reasons. Foremost among those reasons is its utter disregard for the 10th Amendment rights of States. My home State of North Carolina has exercised its State rights and chosen to prohibit collective bargaining rights. It has been a Right-to-Work State since 1947. Under the provisions of this bill, North Carolina could no longer exercise its constitutional rights, but would be forced to comply with unprecedented Federal mandates.

The legislation also does not include protection for secret ballot elections. Public-safety workers would be at the whims of strong-arming union-boss tactics. But despite the threat to the interests of States and their public safety workers and the fact that it supersedes State and local authority, this bill was pushed through the House under a suspension rule.

Fortunately, there is a decent chance this law will be ruled unconstitutional because of the Federal Government's overstepping its bounds and imposing a Federal mandate on States. This bill would preempt State authority to regulate the collective bargaining rights of its State and local public safety employees. While the bill asserts that States would not be preempted, this assertion only applies to States with comparable or greater rights than those required under this legislation. In other words, if a State doesn't match or exceed what the Federal Government wants, it is preempted.

H.R. 980 infringes on State rights and it expands the Federal Government's scope and role by creating an onerous national standard for public safety employee labor laws. But there is no real case for enacting this bill—currently 48 States have labor laws governing these workers and 29 of those States would already meet the proposed standard. The dark side of these 29 States that meet the standard is the 21 States that would have to create new labor laws or face Federal Government intervention of imposed regulations.

Moving away from how this affects States, H.R. 980 does not provide protections for individual public-safety employees who do not want to unionize—especially in States that do not currently allow such unionization. States often have good reason to prohibit such unionization of public-sector employees. Collective bargaining and the process that surrounds it can cause strife in the workplace that might otherwise undermine Americans' public safety. Although current law already prohibits strikes in the public sector, such prohibition has at times been violated during the collective bargaining process.

North Carolina is one of the States that has laws barring monopoly collective bargaining for public safety employees. It would be significantly affected by this bill's mandates. Since North Carolina's laws do not meet these new burdensome standards, the State is faced with two choices: enact or amend its laws that conform to the Federal standard; or have Federal labor law, administered by the Federal Government, govern the rights of its State and local firefighters and public safety officers.

With such an imposition, Democrats are empowering the Federal Government to supersede State's rights and set a minimum standard that must be observed, in an area where

48 States already have some form of allowance present. We do not need to expand the Federal role in this issue and it is unclear whether or not this would be constitutional under the Tenth Amendment.

For decades, States have exercised their constitutional right to make public-sector employment laws that each State found reasonable. With the passage of H.R. 980, the States would be forced to comply with Federal standards that might not reflect the values of the State and its citizens. This is just one more example of how the majority insists on inserting the Federal Government into more and more aspects of our lives. I believe a no vote on this bill is a protest against continued intrusion into issues best left to States.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN CAMPBELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Madam Speaker, on July 23, 2007, I missed rollcall votes 687–690. Regrettably, my flight from California to Washington, DC was cancelled and I had to take a flight that got me here after votes. Had I been here, I would have voted “yes” on votes 687, 688, and 689, and “no” on vote 690.

Rollcall vote 687: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended H.R. 404, Federal Customer Service Enhancement Act;

Rollcall vote 688: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, H. Res. 553, Mourning the passing of Lady Bird Johnson;

Rollcall vote 689: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, H. Res. 519, Honoring the life and accomplishments of Tom Lea on the 100th anniversary of his birth;

Rollcall vote 690: On Ordering the Previous Question, H. Res. 558, Providing for consideration of H.R. 3074, the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies, FY 2008.

THREATS TO U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY: DEPORTATION POLICIES THAT FORCE FAMILIES APART

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, conversations on this very important topic are necessary to recognize the consequences of criminally convicted U.S. residents deported to Latin America and the Caribbean. I commend Chairman ENGEL for taking an interest and exploring the challenges that our deportation policies have imposed on the region. I look forward to working with you and the Committee, as you examine this issue.

Recently, the Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) visited the U.S. Congress. They spoke with several members and met with committees regarding the issues affecting the region. One major concern for them is the impact of thousands of criminally convicted deportees from the United States to the nations

of the Caribbean. At times these individuals are repatriated without notice to the receiving country, regardless of the impact their arrival will have upon the societies to which they are being sent. The adverse impact of this practice is not only felt in the Caribbean, but in our communities as well, due to the financial burden it places on the families left behind without means of support.

The CARICOM members are not asking for a change in the policy, but adjustment to how it is executed. The CARICOM members understand that residence permits are a privilege granted to non-citizens contingent on their good behavior. Clearly, the commission of a crime does not constitute good behavior. However, mothers and fathers are being separated from their families without making the appropriate provisions for the welfare of children who remain in our country. Those repatriated sometimes have no support units in their country of citizenship and are forced into a life of poverty, as well as stigmatized for being deported. In addition, the families they leave behind are left with huge legal bills or in situations where they have to fend off poverty. It is my contention that poverty is a threat to the national security of the United States.

The Human Rights Watch in their July 2007 Report entitled “Forced Apart Families Separated and Immigrants Harmed by United States Deportation Policy,” stated that since 1996 approximately 1.6 million families have been torn apart by the U.S. deportation policies. The top ten countries of origin for non-citizens removed on criminal grounds represent Latin America and the Caribbean. Mexico being the most affected of these nations; with over 500,000 Mexican nationals being repatriated between FY 1997 and FY 2005. Haiti, the poorest nation in our hemisphere, is among the top ten with over 3,000 individuals being returned to that nation. Many parents explained that their children, the vast majority of whom had been left in the deporting country, faced extreme hardships, both emotionally and financially. These are American children that are forced into situations where they have to abandon school to support their families. These are American children sometimes forced to live in single-parent households or households without a parent. Ushered into a life of poverty. Poverty not only pricks our conscience, but it shortchanges our future as well. Society ultimately pays for poverty through a less productive workforce; more crime, higher use of welfare, greater drug addiction and other social ills.

We need to support initiatives to integrate repatriated individuals into their new society. Often they have spent their entire life in the United States and lack a support system in the receiving country. Recommendations that need to be explored include funding to expand or establish resettlement programs. These programs should be geared to setting up transition centers where individuals are afforded basic resources such as food, clothing and shelter. Job training programs and social service type institutions need to be reinforced in the region, since upon deportation, many of them drift into homelessness, and with no job prospects, they end up doing crime as a means of survival.

There needs to be the creation of a system to track and monitor high-risk criminal deportees. In some situations criminals are repatriated and no formal processing takes place in

the receiving country. In essence they are let loose into the community and there are no systems in place to track their movement in the receiving country. It is believed that there is a correlation between the increase in gang related activity in the region and deportees. These individuals often make their way back into the U.S. or form part of trans-national organized crime units.

I am glad to see that this hearing has been convened to explore ways this Congress can help our neighbors in the Region address this issue. Failing to properly reintegrating repatriated individuals is a challenge that negatively impacts our neighbors and threatens our national security.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 734, I was unavoidably absent. Had I been present, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 735, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 736, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 737, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 738, I would have voted "aye." On rollcall No. 739, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 740, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 741, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 742, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 743, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 744, I would have voted "aye." On rollcall No. 745, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 746, I would have voted "aye." On rollcall No. 747, I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO THE MACKINAC BRIDGE

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a daring feat of technology, design and architecture. This week, the mighty Mackinac Bridge turns 50 and, this weekend, the people of the State of Michigan will celebrate the bridge's remarkable legacy.

Before the construction of the bridge, the only way to cross the Straits of Mackinac was by ferry. The area around the Straits of Mackinac had blossomed into a popular summer resort destination. However, year-round boat service across the straits was not practical because, during the cold winters, the waters freeze, forming ice and preventing navigation of the straits. For this reason, as early as the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883, the residents of northern Michigan were inspired to dream of a bridge that would span the Straits of Mackinac and unite Michigan's two peninsulas.

Nonetheless, it would be several decades before the plans for the bridge began to take shape. The process began formally in 1934, when the Michigan Legislature created the Mackinac Straits Bridge Authority of Michigan, to study the feasibility of a bridge, and authorized the Authority to sell bonds for the project.

In the mid 1930s, the Authority twice attempted to obtain federal funds for the project but was unsuccessful, despite the endorsement of the United States Army Corps of Engineers and President Franklin D. Roosevelt. As early as 1936, a route was determined for the bridge. However, World War II put plans for a bridge on hold.

The Mackinac Straits Bridge Authority of Michigan was abolished by the state legislature in 1947 but was reauthorized 3 years later in 1950. In June 1950, a board of three engineers was retained for the project. Following a report by the engineers in January 1951, the state legislature authorized the sale of \$85 million in bonds for bridge construction. The bonds were sold and, in 1953, Dr. David B. Steinman was selected as the engineer for the project. Construction of the Mackinac Bridge began in November of 1954.

The next 3 years would bring a pitched battle between man and the elements. Engineers and ironworkers would defy nature by building a structure that would span 26,000 feet or approximately 5 miles. Not only would the bridge's five miles make it one of the longest suspension bridges in the world, but also the surrounding environs made the bridge's engineering, design and construction a formidable challenge. While most bridges cross placid water, the turbulent straits of Mackinac are ocean-like, often kicking up waves of more than six feet. The brutal northern Michigan winters further complicated construction.

These were the challenging conditions faced by the men and women who built the Mackinac Bridge. The 2,500 ironworkers and other tradesmen that built the bridge arrived at the Mackinac Straits from across the country and the small Michigan towns of St. Ignace and Mackinaw City were not quite ready for the workers' arrival. The laborers came from across the nation, hailing from hometowns in Texas, Idaho, Pennsylvania and Colorado. The laborers who built the bridge called each other by colorful nicknames such as Race Horse Roberts and Beer-Barrel Morgan. Together, they would toil tirelessly and bravely, risking life and limb to erect the bridge. Ultimately, five of them would perish in this endeavor.

The risks these workers endured were enormous. Everyday, they climbed to the top of the towers that would support the bridge's suspension cables. Lugging 40-pound belts with hammers, wrenches, bolts and steel rivets they braved 60 mile per hour winds, which would dip the wind chill to 50 degrees below zero.

Perched on a catwalk that ran between the bridge's 550-foot tall towers, the ironworkers strung the giant suspension cable from tower to tower. The cables that hold up the Mackinac Bridge are comprised of wires the workers spun together to create the suspension cables. In total, the laborers that built the bridge strung 42,000 miles of wire. In constructing the bridge, they used more than a million tons of concrete and steel. The steel is held together by 4.8 million rivets and a million bolts.

In 1957, construction was complete and, on November of that year, the bridge was opened to traffic. Today, 50 years later the Mackinac Bridge continues to tower over the Straits of Mackinac, a testament to those who toiled and died to build it. Travelers driving toward it during the day are awed by the 46-story tall towers stretching into the clouds. By night, when illuminated with thousands of lights, the bridge is an enchanting sight.

The Mackinac Bridge stands as a mighty monument. It stands as a testament to the hard work not only of 2,500 tradesmen and ironworkers that built the bridge, but also to the 7,500 workers at quarries, shops and mills in Michigan, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Minnesota and New Jersey who provided the raw materials to make the bridge. The Mackinac Bridge symbolizes American ingenuity and man's ability to overcome and tame nature. Perhaps most of all, the Mackinac Bridge represents the union of the State of Michigan, two peninsulas, united by a five mile expanse of concrete and steel.

Madam Speaker, this weekend all Michigan residents will officially celebrate the Mackinac Bridge's 50th year. Our state will remember the ingenuity, brilliance and sacrifice that went into building it. I, too, will celebrate as, in the course of traveling my district, I regularly crisscross this mighty bridge, sometimes four times in a single day. Through wind, rain and snow, I have traveled across and explored the Mackinac Bridge from the inside, the outside, from above it and below it. No matter how many times a person crosses the bridge, it always remains a breathtaking sight and a graceful engineering feat! My district is comprised of Michigan's two peninsulas and 1,613 miles of shoreline. Traveling my district would be radically different, and almost impossible, without the Mackinac Bridge, which unites the two peninsulas and all of Michigan's citizens, physically and spiritually.

Madam Speaker, as Michigan celebrates the Mackinac Bridge's 50th birthday, I ask that you and the entire U.S. House of Representatives join me in paying tribute to this wondrous and uniquely American landmark and to the brave laborers from across our Nation who built it.

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WISCONSIN CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association, which is celebrating 100 years of excellence. This outstanding achievement is marked by the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association's commitment to providing safe, efficient, and effective police services.

The Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association's standards of excellence were first instituted in 1907 with the mission of supplying a public voice on social and professional issues for law enforcement. It has grown as a resource for its members by making training available in state-of-the-art concepts in policing, acting as a legislative advocate for law enforcement, providing representation for the general good of law enforcement at the local, state and federal levels, and providing open communications with the public. Its most important objective has been to ensure that Wisconsin law enforcement embodies the highest level of integrity and honesty and embraces moral and ethical behavior based on the principles found in the law enforcement code of ethics.